

Amendments

In the Claims

As required by 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c), the amended claims are rewritten with all changes included. In addition, as permitted under 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(3), a clean version of all of the pending claims is submitted as a single amendment paper. A marked-up copy of the amended claims is also included.

Please cancel claim 2 in its entirety without prejudice or disclaimer thereto.

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. *(Amended)* A composition for inhibiting specific gene expression with reduced side effects, the composition comprising a modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide that is complementary to a portion of a genomic region or gene for which inhibition of expression is desired, or to RNA transcribed from such a gene, wherein the modified CpG is selected from the group consisting of alkylphosphonate CpG, inverted CpG, 2'-O-substituted CpG, stereospecific phosphorothioate CpG, phosphotriester CpG, phosphoramidate CpG, and 2'-5' CpG.
3. *(Amended)* A method for modulating gene expression in a mammal with reduced side effects comprising administering to the mammal a composition according to claim 1, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a gene that is being expressed in the mammal.
4. *(Amended)* A method for therapeutically treating, with reduced side effects, a disease caused by aberrant gene expression, the method comprising administering to an individual having the disease a composition according to claim 1, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a gene that is aberrantly expressed, wherein such aberrant expression causes the disease.